

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 02610 130028Z

ACTION AGRE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3122

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PASS AGRIC FOR HUME, FRASER AND SINDELAR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, CA

SUBJECT: REVISION OF CANADIAN POTATO STANDARDS

REF: HUME LETTER OF MARCH 29.

A. AGATT DISCUSSED PROPOSED CHANGES IN MINIMUM POTATO SIZE
FROM 2 INCHES TO 2 1/4 INCHES WITH CANADIAN HORTICULTURAL
COUNCIL AND DIRECTOR A/C FRUIT AND VEGETABLE DIVISION.

1. INITIALLY THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE PRODUCER DEMAND TO
MAKE MINIMUM SIZE 2 1/4 INCHES FOR ALL POTATOES YEAR AROUND.
THIS OBVIOUSLY TOO TRANSPARENT AS NTB. AGATT WAS
INITIALLY ADVISED THAT EFFORT WAS ATTEMPT TO UP GRADE
DOMESTIC FALL POTATO CROP AND MAINTAIN SAME EFFECTIVE DATE
SEPT. 15. THIS MAY HAVE BEEN TRUE A MONTH AGO BUT DOES
NOT PREVAIL NOW.

2. PLANS NOW ARE TO HAVE 2 1/4 INCH REQUIREMENT IN EFFECT
JULY 1, 1977. PRODUCERS WANTED EFFECTIVE DATE OF JUNE 15.

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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 02610 130028Z

AMMENDMENT PRESENTLY BEING DRAFTED AND ANNOUNCEMENT
EXPECTED IN ABOUT ONE MONTH.

3. CANADIAN SOURCES BELIEVE NEARLY ALL CALIFORNIA LONG
WHITES NORMALLY ENTER CANADA PRIOR TO JUNE 30. UNDERSTAND
THAT POTATOES MEETING 2 INCH STD. ENTERING ON OR BEFORE
JUNE 30 WOULD BE PERMITTED TO MOVE THROUGH MARKETING

SYSTEM.

4. IT IS RECOGNIZED THAT 2 1/4 INCH MINIMUM EFFECTIVE JULY 1 WOULD AFFECT CENTENNIAL VARIETY PRODUCED IN US AS WELL AS CENTENNIAL AND NOR GOLD PRODUCED IN ONTARIO.

5. AGATT ASKED WHAT PROPOSED CHANGE WOULD DO TO THE IMPORTS OF STRIPPER POTATOES. ANSWER: IT WOULD STOP THIS.

6. AGATT ASKED IF A/C HAD OR WOULD CONSIDER MAKING EFFECTIVE DATE JULY 31 SO THAT US AND CANADIAN STANDARDS WOULD BE ON SAME BASIS. ANSWER: THIS WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO CANADIAN PRODUCERS.

B. AGATT NOT IN POSITION TO ASSESS CANADIAN CONTENTION (ITEM 3 ABOVE) THAT JULY 1 DATE SHOULD NOT HINDER CALIFORNIA SHIPMENTS. HOWEVER, EFFORT APPEARS TO BE LARGELY, IF NOT ENTIRELY, MOTIVATED BY PROTECTIONISM. IN RECENT YEARS POTATO PRODUCERS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA HAVE UNSUCCESSFULLY REQUESTED SUR TAX OR QUOTAS ON STRIPPER POTATOES. IT APPEARS THAT REVISION OF MINIMUM SIZE WILL PROVIDE MEASURE OF PROTECTION. CANADIAN SOURCES STATE THAT 95 PERCENT OF CANADIAN CROP WILL MEET NEW STANDARD. THE AMOUNT OF EARLY POTATO PRODUCTION IN CANADA THAT WILL BE AFFECTED IS SMALL. AGATT HAS REASON TO BELIEVE REGULATIONS WILL BE AMENDED TO BE EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 1977. ENDERS

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